



King County

COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

(911 Operator)

KING COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Hourly Rate Range: \$17.51 – \$25.87

Job Announcement: 06LW6046

OPEN: 5/3/06 CLOSE: 7/5/06

WHO MAY APPLY: This Civil Service position is open to the general public.

WHERE TO APPLY: Required forms and materials **must** be sent to: **Human Resources Division, 500 4th Ave., Room 450, Seattle, WA 98104**. Application materials must be received by 4:30 p.m. on the closing date. (Postmarks are NOT ACCEPTED.) **PLEASE NOTE:** Applications not received at the above location may not be processed.

FORMS AND MATERIALS REQUIRED: The [King County application form](#), data sheet, self-screening background questionnaire, and a structured essay.

WORK LOCATION: Regional Communications and Emergency Coordination Center, 3511 NE 2nd, Renton, Washington 98056

WORK SCHEDULE: This full time Civil Service position is overtime eligible. The Communications Center operates 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Applicants must be willing to work any shift or workweek, including holidays, weekends and mandatory overtime.

PRIMARY JOB DUTIES INCLUDE: Communications Specialists are responsible for answering non-emergency and emergency telephone lines that come into the County's 911 center. They must determine the nature of the call, the geographic location of the situation, dispatch police mobile units as appropriate, or refer the call to the appropriate agencies. Communications Specialists must be able to make fast responses and correct decisions, take charge of conversations, obtain accurate information from callers, enter information into a computer while talking, and make quick decisions regarding the priority to be assigned to emergencies.

1. Answer emergency and non-emergency phone lines.
2. Gathers necessary information by interviewing callers and entering responses into a computer system.
3. Locates addresses, location of the mobile units and jurisdictional boundaries by referring to maps.
4. Determines appropriate procedures and guidelines to apply to specific calls and situations.
5. Determines emergency response priority by determining whether immediate police response could save lives or prevent crimes.
6. Routes call for service to the correct dispatcher.
7. Communicates with police mobile units and other emergency agencies by using telephones and radios.
8. Maintains records of calls and actions taken, by completing written reports.

QUALIFICATIONS: Ability to type a minimum of 35 WPM, perform several tasks at the same time,

write using grammatically correct sentence structure, comprehend and retain knowledge of laws, ordinances, codes, policies and associated information. **Willing to work any shift and any scheduled days off as assigned.**

NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: All Civil Service applicants must be US citizens who can read and write the English language fluently. Offers of employment will be contingent on passing a hearing test and a thorough background investigation, including a polygraph examination.

After successful completion of classroom training, new employees work as trainees and are evaluated and tested during this period to become certified as call receivers. After a minimum of 18 months, call receivers are expected to enter into dispatch training. Upon advancement to dispatcher, employees are advanced to the next highest dispatcher salary step. **Dispatch certification is required to maintain employment.**

UNION MEMBERSHIP: Employees in this job must join the Public Safety Employees Union, Local 519.

CLASS CODE: 7451

SELECTION PROCESS

- Application packet is received and screened for standard qualifications.
- All candidates are contacted, in writing, approximately 6-8 weeks from the filing deadline.
- The Essay will be reviewed and scored and those who qualify will be invited for further testing.
- Successful candidates are scheduled for an oral board interview.
- Final scores are determined and a Civil Service Eligibility list for Communications Specialist is established. Candidates are notified, in writing, regarding their placement on the eligibility list.
- The top three names are referred to the Sheriff's Office and a final hiring decision is made.
- The final candidates undergo a background investigation which includes a polygraph and a psychological evaluation.

ESSAY INSTRUCTIONS

On white, 8 ½" x 11" paper, please write an essay (no more than two pages) on **what experiences you have had that you think have prepared you for working in the environment described below.** Put your name and the date at the top of each page you submit. As well as content, we will be evaluating your grammar, spelling, punctuation, format and clarity. Be thorough and honest regarding your duties and experience. This portion of the test is scored.

The Sheriff's Office Communications Center is a busy and stressful place. Call receivers work with two keyboards and three computer screens, while answering and prioritizing incoming 9-1-1 emergency calls as well as non-emergency ones. Dispatchers also use multiple keyboards and screens, and are sometimes responsible for dispatching to and dealing with radio transmissions from as many as 50 or more officers.

Write an essay on what experiences you have had that you think have prepared you for working in this environment, paying particular attention to your experiences which:

- Evidence loud, busy, perhaps even confusing work environments, e.g. Wall Street pit, hospital ER, busy restaurant kitchen, large childcare facility
- Indicate an ability to prioritize tasks, e.g. hospital triage, customer service under pressure, large hotel check-in/out lines, taxi or delivery dispatcher
- Relate to handling emergencies, overwhelming situations, other people's panic, e.g. helped out at a car wreck scene, evacuated siblings from a house fire, dove in to save a drowning swimmer
- Show an understanding of how limited the resources are for helping people, e.g. finite number of deputies, not every call will be of a police/criminal nature, time constraints for handling calls

COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST SELF SCREENING BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

Applicant Name: _____

In order to apply for the Sheriff's Office, you must answer the following employment conditions and background questions. Circle your answers in the table on this page. All answers will be verified in the course of the required background investigation and polygraph examination. **Dishonest answers will be grounds for rejecting your application.** If you have questions regarding the meaning of any statement listed below, or if you have committed any illegal actions (whether or not you were caught) other than very minor actions, such as stealing a pencil from your employer or a candy bar as a child, please call **prior to submitting an application** to find out whether these actions will disqualify you: Background Investigations (206) 296-4074

1. Are you now a United States citizen?	YES	NO
2. Can you read, write and speak the English language so as to be easily understood?	YES	NO
3. Are you willing to work any required schedule? The Communications Center operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You MUST be willing and able to work any shift (day, swing, graveyard), holidays, weekends, and mandatory overtime as needed	YES	NO
4. Are you willing to work overtime? You may be required to work overtime at the manager's discretion.	YES	NO
4. Have you been convicted of a felony as an adult?	YES	NO
5. Have you bought, sold, possessed, transported or used marijuana within the last three years?	YES	NO
6. Have you bought, sold, possessed, transported or used any other controlled substance such as, cocaine, LSD, or other illegal non-prescription drugs within the last five years?	YES	NO
7. Have you ever committed any <u>serious</u> illegal acts (whether or not you were caught)? If yes, please contact Background Investigations.. Note: Misdemeanors committed after the age of 18 will be screened on an individual basis.	YES	NO

Signature

Date